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Server's Hell

By Olive Hannigan

I'm sure most people have worked in the service industry at some point, or some people

know someone who was a part of the service industry. It is, as usually described, a hell on earth.

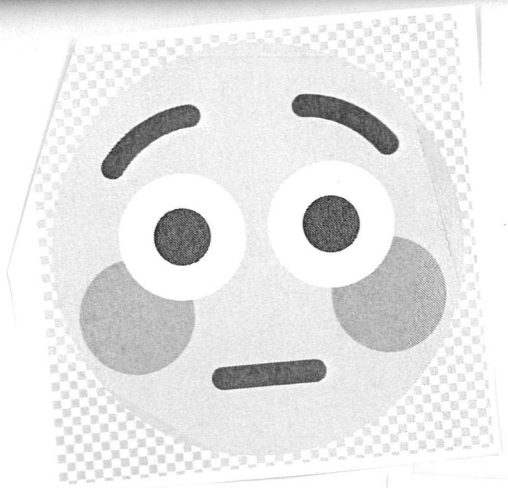
You clock in, put on your best customer service face and voice, and then power through the

day- rain or shine. Over the summer, I was a server at a breakfast chain (I won't name which

one, as I do genuinely love my coworkers and the regulars and don't want to put them under

fire). It was a good job, clock in, take orders, joke with coworkers, clock out. Here's a short

recounting of my worst customer stories this year.



1) Teabag

As a server, you follow a sort of script when you're serving people. It's not on purpose.

Life is just easier when you can follow a flow to get through the day. Basic lines (Hey guys? How

are we doing today? Good? Great. My name is...) and a few quips in an attempt to cover up a

small mistake or make a bit more money (handing the check to a grubby-handed baby, saying

it's their turn to treat their parents. That usually gets a laugh from people). But sometimes, that

script doesn't work with people. Repeating yourself gets exhausting when people don't listen.

It was a Sunday, a rush. I was opening, which meant you get two booths- where you will face either the best kind of person or the worst (such as the man who asked me if a clearly messy booth was still open, and then proceeded to seat himself there while there were still dirty dishes on it). Today I got a bad table.

Party of seven. Three children, four adults. Easy. I've done a party of 32 before (more on that later), seven is lightwork. They sit down, put in their drinks and order. The grandmother (who was maybe in her fifties) orders tea. At my restaurant we have a tea-set. A small plate, decorated with a tea caddy (small box filled with an assortment of teas).

"Here's your teapot and your tea set," She thanks me. Their food comes out. She asks me where her tea is.

"Your tea is on the small plate, with the small caddy we supply and the teapot," Her son even points it out. I check on them again halfway through their meal. No issues, no complaints.

The food is awesome, they say. I come around, hand them their check. They call me over five minutes later.

"You charged me for a tea. I never got my tea," I could only stare directly at the plate I pointed out twice.

"Your tea is in the tea caddy on the table, with your teapot."

"Take it off my check."

...Yeah.

The AUDACITY!!

2) Hot Sauce Lady

We have some regulars who are not the best. Most of them are awesome, they feel

practically like friends. They know my life, my family, I see them at least once a week. But Hot

sauce lady? We know her well.

She will take our hot sauce as some twisted form of revenge for her husband not getting

a veteran's discount. We have to sit her by the entrance, near the host stand, just so our

manager can keep a close eye on her. My manager caught her a few times, actually made her

pull the Cholula from her bag and put it back on the table the last time they came.

The issue with hot sauce lady is that her and her husband come in, order the same

thing, and ask if we have a veterans discount. The server usually says no, but corporate is

working on it. When we go to reset the table, we always notice that the bottle of Cholula is

missing from the table.

The worst part? They never put hot sauce on their food. It's oatmeal and a waffle that

they get. I always wonder how much hot sauce they have at home.

Straight to JAIL

3) Soup

This is the 32-top I mentioned earlier. It was a Tuesday, where we only have four servers

compared to our usual nine or ten. I clock in, my manager says that we have a retirement

community coming in from a retreat. All 32 of them- not including the bus drivers. We set the

tables, brace for the servers' equivalent of war. Water jugs on every table, menus placed,

silverware polished to the nines because we know they will find an issue with something.

They all sit down, my coworkers and I get all their drinks organized, take all of their

orders. We repeat every motion like a text-to-speech robot, making sure that it's clear that we

are doing what they tell us. Iced tea? Yes ma'am, one iced tea for the lady in purple. Muffin for

the man in the floral shirt sitting closest to the window?

We retreat what and where and when

and how fast. Our A-game.

One table, all elderly women. One woman asks me what kind of soups we have. I tell her

veggie and tomato. She asks for veggie. Her friend orders tomato. I make it a point to talk loud,

clear, and slow, pointing with my pen to each woman and making unwavering eye contact to

make sure they understand what they ordered. They all nod. Thank god, first hurdle over.

Their food starts coming out. Kitchen is in a frenzy. A 32-order ticket on a Tuesday, when we only have two people on the line instead of 4 or 5. We bring out their food in record time- ten minutes and less for each item.

We have one hiccup, a woman forgetting which sandwich she ordered. She tells my coworker thatreplace that with the sandwich isn't hers. I tell him to take it back and that I'll handle it. I bring the exact same sandwich out, say "turkey club" as clearly as I possibly could.

"Oh! That's mine!"

E-z. I got this.

I bring out the soup next.

"Tomato soup for you, ma'am," I place it in front of her friend. I turn to her. "And your veggie soup will be right out."

As I bring the veggie soup out. Comma instead of a period I see the tomato soup in front of Mrs. Veggie Soup.

"I don't like my soup," She tells me. I correct her.

"Of course, this is the vegetable soup. That's our tomato soup, which is what your friend ordered."

THE SOUP WOMAN IS MY ENEMY

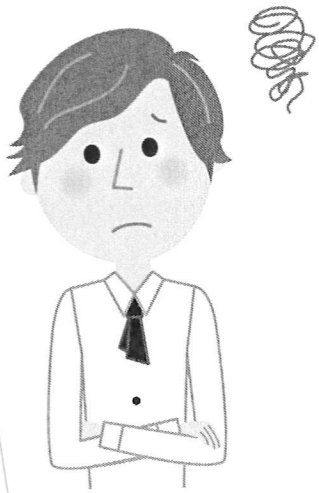
"I don't like it," I can only stare wistfully, in utter disbelief. I place the soup down and talk

to her friend.

"Would you like me to get you a new bowl of vegetable soup?" They all say no, I place

the soup down. At that point, I'd offered all solutions I could and they didn't take any of it. I come

back to hand out the checks (which, mind you, all 32 wanted separate checks).



CORNBREAD ALWAYS LOOKS RIGHT WTF

"I didn't like my soup, can you take it off my check," Fuck it. Fine. Whatever.

"Can I get cornbread instead?" I put the cornbread in, profusely ~~apologizing~~ apologizing to the cooks.

"This cornbread doesn't look right. Can you take it off?" If you go to a restaurant. Can add ellipsis here ...whatever you do... to really add that tone and extra entertainment to the reader Please,

PLEASE, do not be Mrs. Veggie Soup.

4) "My salad looks like grass"

Picture this: It's a Wednesday morning. The closer called out, and you're down to three servers for the whole day. Half of the restaurant is packed, a new manager is being trained, and the district manager is visiting to scope out how we're doing. New manager is unsure, but doing his best. We get slammed. No busser, people pouring in. Tables are dirty. No hostess, we have to seat people. No food runners, we have to run food. All three of us are nearly strangling each other from stress. I tell my one coworker to go to the walk in and breathe. I can hold down the fort. Like a stupid martyr. Down to two.

A woman comes in with her husband. They have complaints already. Too slow service.

Sorry ma'am. I have five tables sat at the same time, and I have to run food, drinks, make drinks, take orders, seat people, and bus tables. All three servers are sweating. My other coworker is crying in the bathroom. Hell is real, and we're there. I'm carrying two armfuls of trays with drinks, apologizing and practically begging people to grab their drinks out of my arms because my hands aren't free. Napkins, syrup, silverware (because yes, we had to roll silverware and ran out at that moment).

55 BURGERS

I'm as attentive as I possibly can be, taking orders, holding conversation, bending to their

every whim because I get paid $2.35 an hour, dammit! The wife demands that I put extra

avocado on her sandwich. I put on the ticket to add as much avocado as we can fit into a

ramekin. She orders salad, saying that she doesn't usually like the taste. I tell her I'll bring out

extra dressing and, if she doesn't like it, I can put in a new side. No worries. Easy fix.

The food comes out, with extra everything. She yells again. Her sandwich isn't toasted. I

tell her that it states on the menu that we usually don't toast it, but I can take it back and have

them do that. She says no. I come back a minute later. Not enough avocado. I point to the

ramekin, still full of avocado. Yes, ma'am, here's some extra. She asks me to take it back. I take

it back, come back with so much avocado it's spilling from the sides. I put the plate down.

I come back to check on them before their food comes out. She yells at me because she

spilled her water and used all the napkins I gave them earlier. Like it's my fault she spilled her

water all over the table. I put on my happy face, bring out more napkins that I usually would. I

take the used ones back to throw out.

"My salad looks like grass. Is this grass? Did you serve me grass?"

"...Ma'am, it's salad. Can I get you a new side?" She says no. How else do I fix this? It's

my manager's problem now. My temper is getting the best of me. My manager leaves, comes

Back.

"She says she wants salad again. But she didn't like her salad. I don't know what she

wants. Her sandwich is too toasted. What do I do?"

I really wish I could tell you, man. I really do.

Eventually we end up taking it off their check, sending them off. They don't tip, because

why would they? It's fine. In this field, you gotta cut your losses at some point.

My point in all this? Please be kind to your servers. We've had all kinds of threats made

to us, been called sluts by grown men over waffles and eggs, been tripped and grabbed and

had pictures taken of us without our permission (this part has happened to me several times

over the summer). The last thing we need is another difficult table added to the list we build to get rid of the "to" and capitalize the E in every, but keep the Every. Single. Day, love that, really drives the point of the piece home.

every. Single. Day. We're not asking for an angel, just kindness.Well-written piece, very entertaining. Having worked in several restaurants I fully understand the server struggle.

Fleeting Folklore

By Dylan Germann

Items and concepts go out of stock all the time, through the changing times and perceptions of life. Though something which is very scarcely given any mind is the fading of U.S folklore from culture, literature, and society. A process which happens through the years, when folklore is essentially filtered and absorbed only to those few who are interested, and oftentimes gatekept in locality with where it may have originated-somewhat to a hindering degree of recognition. The notion of a decline in folklore across the states is one that signifies a loss of Americana and culture, as folklore and folklife have been crucial to many American regions since their beginnings. Though this decline is not definitively set in stone, there is still room for a rebound and revitalization. Hopefully there will be a wide recognition of Americana and folklore beyond sensationalism.

A key sentiment of modern and recognized American folklore is often the aspect of being a cryptid/urban myth. Many prominent folk tales cultivate a very specific feeling and vibe, typically including an otherworldly creature or event. This, of course, never ends with clarity. The fault within these tales is that they are sensationalized through the media, and the product of that creates tales which are more centered around vibes of Americana eeriness rather than reality or living culture. Even I admittedly find these tales charming to a large degree because of how they feel and seem through the imagination, rustic and quaint through the comforts of the woods-like a comfortable horror flick. If you were to ask me about one of my favourite American folktales, I'd tell you in a heartbeat that it'd be the Mothman: the ambivalent and enigmatic moth-man-like creature with red eyes. I love the mothman with all my heart, and it is popular because it cultivates a certain tangibility and feeling which many find charming-though does the story of the mothman have more substance than tales which are

not sensationalized? The answer to that question would be no. The sensationalism behind mothman, and often for many of the cryptid folktales of the US, is easily identifiable as a relatively shallow yet wide pool of interest. Through dissecting mothman specifically, one can see the actual depth and relativism of the creature beyond its rustic-eerie charm.

Especially when one realizes that there is no definitive moral or message behind many of the classical mothman iterations of folklore. Opposed to traditional and older iterations of folklore, while often more obscure, cultivate a degree of depth through not only the tangible elements of their surroundings but also the messages in which they tell.

An instance of folklore which contains a message but also retains an absurdity to it, is the Irish folktale of Pat Diver. Which in summary is about a wandering man who seeks housing for the night, but is asked to tell a story as payment which he refuses to do. Then through the night he is forced by three lazy giants to do labor that would ultimately kill Pat Diver at the end of it all. Though sunrise came and Pat Diver was alive and free to escape, then a year later a man recognizes him and says "now you have a story to tell". While exceptionally strange, there is a weird message in having a story to tell-and there is a sense of depth that can be dissected. Now admittedly, Irish folklore spans a far greater timespan than the existence of the US, but also spans a much smaller area-increasing the chance of retention of culture and stories through this locality. Though nonetheless the premise of folklore often does surround a message more than a rustic charm.

Over the summer, I researched the folklore of my new home, the Pine Barrens of New Jersey, and found that the existing records of folklore through the internet were limited at best. The majority of that limited information solely detailed the Jersey Devil. The Jersey Devil, while having a multitude of accounts and depth to the original story, is an example of a sensationalized folktale like the mothman-and it's sensationalized for good reason. Though beyond the accounts of the Jersey Devil, the accounts of much folklore from these pine woods are obscure and hard to get to. Many of these stories exist through small publishing houses, speculative books, and or existing through the stories of an old man who frequents the breadbox diner near the bay. It's evident through both ghost towns and Pine Barrens scenery that many of these places had their own rich accounts. However, these folklores and troubles were forgotten or recorded with very little detail.. After all, the Pine Barrens used to be a place where bandits and unsavory folk resided, so the accounts of those woods were often fearful and mystical. But where are many of these accounts today?

A piece of folklore that's been poorly recorded and shrouded in vagueness is the Black Dog of the Pine Barrens. The folktale is generally very self explanatory, a mystical Black Dog without any owner will appear to those worthy enough in the Pine Barrens, and will guide them to

treasure or safety. It is speculated that it was once the dog of the Scottish pirate Captain Kidd, but it is also speculated that it's a spirit of the woods and nature's companionship manifested. I like to theorize that the spirit is one of European origin brought to America and change. In many European tales, the black dog is a symbol of ruin or evil-though in this case it is the inverse. While I find the anthropological sense of this tale interesting, I also find the fault in this tale the sheer lack of information surrounding this dog and the accounts around it. It leaves a lot to the imagination and speculation, which I am sure was not always the case. I hope that one day I will encounter the Black Dog to figure out the truth of the lore myself.

Ultimately, I feel that American folklore is often sensationalized which boosts the gaze on folklore to a transcontinental and state level. However, this sensationalism also causes the loss of folklore, as more local stories get less and less attention, even by the state's own residents. This progressive loss is through the simple filtering of information with changing times, as information nowadays is not adequately translated from analog to the digital age . Overall, this is something solvable, and there is still hope for the old rooted culture in folklore-it just requires a bit of effort beyond sensationalized rumors and events.

THE SQUONK

Beaver College Logs - Stiteler Auditorium

By Emma Pegram

To "86" something - a term I'm sure you know if you're in the restaurant industry - is to delete it, or remove it in some way. Over time, plenty of things have been removed from Arcadia University for one reason or another. And as least in my mind, no removal is as important as what happened to Stiteler Auditorium.

If you're a new student, you might not even know about Stiteler, or what I'm talking about. It's a decent sized space above Murphy Hall, used occasionally for theater practices and other minor events. If you've been on campus a bit longer, you might know bits and pieces, or remember a particular uproar a few years back regarding its renovation. And if you're a long-time member of the theater department, or particularly invested in campus history, you might have very strong opinions on the aforementioned renovation.

Before we get into the recent outrage, let's talk about the history. Murphy Hall is one of the oldest buildings on campus, likely from the 1880s, around even before the Gray Towers Castle. It served as the stables of the estate - with what became Stiteler Auditorium being the hayloft.

When Beaver College acquired the modern campus, Stiteler was converted into a chapel, with the lower levels made into a gymnasium. At the time, circa 1920s and 30s, Beaver College didn't have the funds to fully renovate, meaning many donations were taken. In particular, the donation of $20,000 in 1929 - nearly $370,000 in modern times! - was used to redo the spaces. The donor, one Jane Murphy, still lends her name to the building to this day.

Now, we skipped over it a little bit, but Stiteler Auditorium used to be a chapel. What might seem odd and unrelated now was actually a rather common practice for the time. Many academic institutions,including colleges, had ties to churches - not only for funding, but just because America used to be a far more religious country.

For decades, Beaver College had strong ties to the local church, and some of that was reflected in the fact that Stiteler served as a chapel for ages, until at least the 1970s. Even after Stiteler started to be used for more secular purposes, the general "church aesthetic" was kept. Old photos of the space even show a church organ and stained glass windows (keep those windows in mind, we'll get back to them in a bit).

Now you might be wondering, how did that all change? If you know Stiteler today, you know that it's a barren box, without lights, curtains, or even auditorium seating. Some of you might already know the answer to this, but for those who don't, I'll give you the quick rundown. Stiteler was completely gutted out in the summer of 2022, for the use of the Physical Therapy department. Essentially, our PT program needed a lot of space, and Stiteler was ripe for the taking. Everything was torn out - the theater lights, the curtains, the organ, and even the stained glass windows were pried out.

Now, it would be one thing for the space to be renovated for the Health Sciences Department - it's one of the biggest programs on campus, so their needs get tended to fairly quickly. The kicker is that very few people even knew about the renovations, and it was poorly communicated to those on campus. One minute, Stiteler was being used for theater, and the next, an empty box. The PT program only needed the space for a short amount of time, so once they were done,

Stiteler was left as is - and how it's been left up to this day.

Now that's already looking like a pretty big blunder on Arcadia's part - tearing up an entire

theater space to be used very short term, and never restoring it. But it gets deeper than that. For

one thing, the grand organ, donated by the same Jane Murphy who funded renovations in the

first place? Completely torn out. Parts of the organ are in the attic of Murphy, but that's the kind

of thing that can't be put back together.

My main grievance, however, is the stained glass windows. You might've seen one on

display in the library - it looks fairly generic, a basic portrayal of some religious figure. But that

first glance would be missing a part of Beaver College history, and a huge reason why Stiteler's

renovation is such a big deal.

The Stiteler stained glass isn't just random artwork - they were made by a faculty

member, John Hathaway. He did stained glass artwork for a variety of places, including

churches in Philadelphia, Maryland, and Washington D.C. Those windows were artwork

produced specifically for the school. Further, they're not just depicting miscellaneous religious figures. Each and every piece of stained glass - six, if I'm counting correctly - symbolically depict other members of Beaver College staff. Not just those who had retired, but specifically those who had passed away. Each member was represented with a different saint, with words and images surrounding them that related to each staff. John Hathaway himself even got one upon his death. One specially designed by Beaver College students with help from Hathaway's daughter.

Those stained glass windows aren't just windows - they're artwork, memorializing real people and are important parts

of college history; and during the renovation of Stitler, they were torn out with crowbars. It's possible they might've been thrown away, had a few historically-passionate members of Arcadia staff not saved them. The stained glass is now kept safe and sound in the Landman Library Archives - but is that really a fitting place for art? A dark basement, only to be viewed by a handful of people?

What happened to Stiteler is a tragedy. For a university that prides itself on its rich

background, it seems to do so little to try and preserve it - forsaking historically rich areas of

campus in favor of short-term gain. I've reached out to both Student Government as well as the

President of the university, but - at the time of writing - have yet to receive an ultimate

response. And unfortunately, that's about all I, as one person, can do.

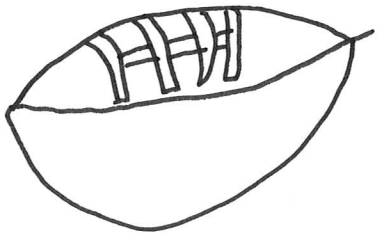
But it doesn't have to be just me. If you're reading this article and it strikes a chord with

you, please raise awareness in some way. If you're a student, please reach out to Arcadia staff

or admin and share this information with them. If enough of us make a big enough protest about this, it might be enough to bring Stiteler's stained glass back to campus proper. After all, stained glass is only so beautiful because of the sunlight shining through it.

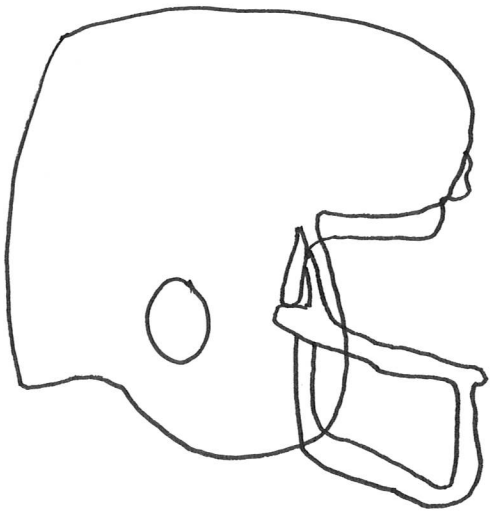
The 1986 NFL Draft Debacle

By Ethan Ginsberg



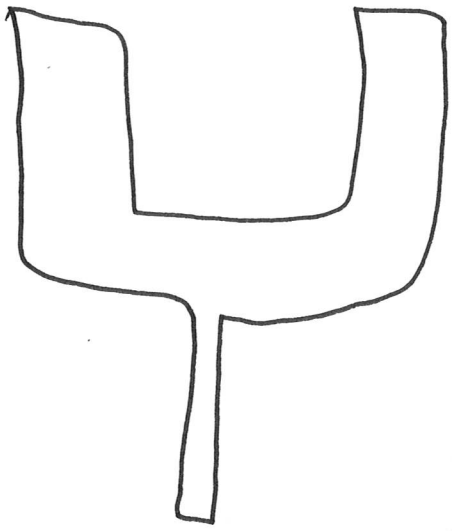
The 1986 National Football League (NFL) Draft is one of the most fascinating events in NFL history. While the draft did produce a multitude of Pro Bowlers, it was only able to bear one Hall of Famer, Charles Haley, drafted 96th overall out of James Madison University by the San Francisco 49ers. This is well below the 1980s decade average of 4.1 Hall of Famers per draft class in a decade that had legendary draft classes like 1981 and 1983, which produced 7 and 8 Hall of Famers, respectively. On top of that was the 1989 draft class, where 4 of the first 5 picks were Hall of Famers, including Barry Sanders, arguably the greatest running back of all time, and Deion Sanders, who is generally recognized as the greatest cornerback ever. 1986 was not just bad; it was generationally bad, as it was the first draft class in 27 years to produce only 1 Hall of Famer, and it would take another 14 years for the next single Hall of Famer-producing class to come around.

This draft class does have one saving grace, and that would be Bo Jackson, who was taken first overall by the Tampa Bay Buccaneers. Jackson is widely recognized as one of, if not the greatest, athletes of all time. Not only did he go number 1 overall in the NFL draft, but he was also drafted into Major League Baseball (MLB) 3 times, eventually landing as a member of the Kansas City Royals, and would play in MLB for parts of 8 seasons. He also played 4 seasons in the NFL as a member of the Oakland Raiders, where he became one of the most iconic players in history due to his combination of speed and athleticism. Now I know that you are probably thinking that there is a typo because I said he was drafted by the Buccaneers, it is not, though. Bo Jackson was indeed selected first overall by the Buccaneers in 1986, but he refused to play a game for them because he believed they tried to sabotage his baseball career by making him ineligible to finish out his final season of baseball at Auburn University after inviting him for a visit to their team facilities. Jackson ended up sitting out the entire 1986 NFL season, electing to instead focus full-time on baseball.



TOUCHDOWN!

THE KICK IS GOOD!



THE GOALPOSTS ARE NOT!

That is not where his football career ends, though. The very next year, the Oakland Raiders took a flyer on Bo and drafted him in the 7th round, 183rd overall. This was one of the greatest decisions the franchise ever made. While Bo is not in the Hall of Fame, he was one of the most athletically dominant players, and for 4 years, he terrorized opposing defenses. There is a reason he is synonymous with Tecmo Bowl- he was just that good.

The 1986 draft was certainly a spectacle with many theatrics to make up for the lack of star talent. I definitely think there is a possibility that in the Buccaneers management's head, corrupted by dysfunction, they thought that they could sabotage Bo's baseball career and just have him be cool with it. I don't really think you even need the benefit of hindsight to realize that that was a bad idea. The people who were paid to run an actual NFL franchise thought that manipulating one of their potential players into playing for them was the best course of action. Mindblowing.

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